

GRADUATE HANDBOOK  
FOR  
MASTER OF SCIENCE IN  
GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEMS



DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND  
GEOSCIENCES  
COLLEGE OF SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING  
TECHNOLOGY  
SAM HOUSTON STATE UNIVERSITY

Updated Fall2021



## GRADUATE STUDENT CONTRACT

I, \_\_\_\_\_ have received a copy of the Graduate Student Handbook from the Department of Environmental and Geosciences. I understand that I am expected to abide by all policies, deadlines, and time lines set forth both in this handbook and those found in the Graduate Catalog, Guidelines for Admission to Candidacy, Schedule of Classes and Thesis Requirements. I also acknowledge that it is my responsibility, and not the Graduate Coordinator nor members of the department, to see that I meet these obligations and deadlines. Additionally, I agree that my admission status as well as any financial support by the Department of Environmental and Geosciences may be withdrawn should it be found that I have not followed these policies in good faith.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date

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## ACADEMIC PROCEDURES

The department of Environmental and Geosciences offers a Master of Science degree in Applied GIS. The program requires students to complete 36 credit hour of graduate course work. The Master's program offers two tracks; a Traditional track (thesis and non-thesis option) that offers a mix of online and face-to-face classes and a Professional track (non-thesis only) that is offered completely online.

The traditional track (thesis and non-thesis option) of GIS Master's degrees is geared towards students with no prior experience/background in GIS or towards students who have completed an undergraduate degree with no work experience. All face to face classes are offered at the Sam Houston State University campus located at The Woodlands Center on Hwy

The online professional track is geared towards professionals with at least 2-3 years work experience.

## APPLICATION / ACCEPTANCE PROCEDURES

Regular Admission

International students who receive a Form I-20 (F-1) or DS-2019 (J-1) based on admission to this program will be required to maintain full time enrollment (9 credits per semester) and will be subject to the rules and regulations that pertain to the F-1 student visa status. Prospective international students MUST also visit the [International Programs](#) page for more information about graduate studies at Sam Houston State University.

\*Conditional Admission.

An applicant whose records are incomplete may be granted conditional admission. Such students will be classified as conditional graduate students until all records are complete and all regular admission requirements are fulfilled. Conditional admission allows for the completion of no more than six hours of graduate credit and is valid for only one semester. All requirements for regular admission must be met prior to enrollment.

## Transfer Credit.

A total of nine (9) credit hours may be transferred to SHSU from another accredited graduate program. However, for a course to be transferred, there should be an equivalent course in the current graduate program, and that course cannot be taken again. Only courses taken within the last six years can be transferred. Undergraduate credits cannot be transferred and used towards graduate degree. Exceptions to this rule require approval by the Department Chair and Dean.

## ACADEMIC EXPECTATIONS

### Academic Good Standing for Graduate Students

As per Academic Policy Statement 910312

- x A minimum grade point average of 3.0 is required in all graduate course work. All grades earned at SHSU (A, B, C, F) in courses listed for graduate credit on the student's official Degree Page will be included in computing the grade point average. The marks of Q, W, CR, NC, IP, and X are not counted as hours attempted in computing the SHSU grade point average.
- x Grades earned at another institution may not be used to remove a grade of "C" or lower earned at SHSU.
- x The appropriate academic dean may place on probation, retain on probation, or terminate any student deficient in grade points.

### Academic Probation, Termination, or Dismissal for Graduate Students

As per Academic Policy Statement 910312

- x A graduate student who falls below a 3.0 SHSU grade point average at the close of any semester or summer semester during which one or more semester hours are attempted will be placed on probation. Two summer sessions are equivalent to one long semester. If an enrolled student on probation fails to achieve a minimum of a 3.0 SHSU grade point average at the close of the next semester following the start of the probation, the student will be terminated from graduate studies.
- x A graduate student who earns a grade of F in any graduate course at SHSU will be terminated from graduate studies.
- x A student who earns a grade of C in any course at SHSU (repeated or distinct course) within the academic program may have their graduate status reviewed by a committee of the department or college graduate faculty. The committee will recommend an appropriate remediation for the student.
- x A student who fails to meet any approved program specific standards for academic performance, including professional standards, in consonance with section 7.04 of Academic Policy Statement 910312, may be dismissed from the program and not permitted to register for courses in the program.

### Removal of Academic Probation for Graduate Students

The student will be removed from probation at the close of the semester or summer semester in which the SHSU grade point average achieves the required standard.

## Appeals Process for





### Examination of Completion.

All graduate students must pass a graduate comprehensive exam (see below) over the graduate course work of their degree program.

Additionally, graduate students completing a thesis will be required to give a presentation of their thesis proposal/prospectus and oral thesis defense and will be subject to an oral examination of the thesis topic.

### Comprehensive Exam.

All graduate students must pass a Comprehensive Exam. The Comprehensive Exam will be administered by the Comprehensive Examination Committee which consists of three GIS graduate faculty members. A written comprehensive examination will be administered by the comprehensive exam advisory committee for each degree candidate. © 2012-2013 GIS (10) 047-01 to 05 of 12

Thesis guidelines are available from the Graduate School [Thesis/Dissertation webpage](#) or from Newton Gresham Library [Thesis & Dissertation website](#)

## Thesis Advisor

A student pursuing a thesis option to choose a graduate faculty member from the Department of Environmental and Geosciences at SHSU as a Major Advisor (see Appendix for Advisor – Student Agreement form), by the end of the second semester, to guide him or her in their thesis work. The Major Advisor will serve as the chairperson of their Thesis Advisory Cce (he)]TJes4 (l)-]1 (c)1 0.088 5eofbill b

The department in consultation with the library has decided that students pursuing the thesis track will follow the Chicago Manual of Style for citations when writing their prospectus and thesis. Prominent geography journals follow the Chicago Manual of Style. Here is a link to the Chicago Manual of Style: <http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/home.htm> for further reference.

Prospectus.

The candidate, in consultation with their thesis advisor/chair of the thesis committee, will select a subject of investigation and determine the availability of the required sources, facilities, materials, and equipment for the research and the writing of the thesis. The student will prepare a thesis prospectus which will specify the thesis topic and the purpose of the proposed investigation, describe the proposed method(s) of investigation, indicate the relationship of study to relevant research and findings of scholars in the student's area of concentration, and provide a commentary on source materials and/or facilities available for the successful completion of the research.

A student must present their prospectus at the latest by the beginning of their third regular semester.

The prospectus shall be submitted to the thesis committee on ~~submission~~ ~~presentation~~. After the committee has approved and signed the prospectus, it is submitted to the academic dean for final approval. Any subsequent changes to the topic or the proposed method of investigation must be approved in writing by the thesis committee and submitted for approval to the appropriate academic dean.

In order to earn a grade of CR (Credit) in GEOG 6398-Thesis I, a student must successfully present and defend a thesis prospectus. Until then a grade will be awarded.

See Appendix for Thesis Prospectus Approval Form.

Continuous Enrollment Requirement

Per University policy, once a student enrolls in a thesis course (GEOG 6398 or GEOG 6099), the student must continue to enroll in a thesis course each semester until the student graduates. For example, once a student enrolls in GEOG 6398, the student must either enroll in GEOG 6398 or enroll in GEOG 6099 the following semester, which would typically be the semester of expected graduation. Once a student has completed all of the thesis courses required for the degree, they may satisfy the continuous enrollment policy by enrolling in a credit hour section of the thesis course.

It is advisable that a student should not register for any thesis courses until after the prospectus is approved, especially given that students must follow the continuous enrollment policy.

ThesisRouteSheet TheOffice of GraduateStudies—in collaborationwith theRegistrar’sOffice, the Library, and the IT—has created an electronic thesis route sheet for students who complete theses and dissertations. This electronic route sheet is generated by the student and will appear in the emailsof thesis/dissertationdirectorsandco-directors, promptingthemfor approval.

Time Table of Procedures and Processes This is a tentative time table and may be customized for every student. Hence, every student will have variations depending on the needs and interests of each individual student).

~~First Regular (in Fall) (Spring) (Summer) (in 536)~~



## TENTATIVE GRADUATE COURSE ROTATION

Course Number	Course Name	Semester Offered
GEOG 5361		





become familiar with the fundamental concepts in object-oriented programming and develop programming skills. Credit 3.

Prerequisite: GEOG 5361, GEOG 536

GEOG 5369. Internship in GIS

Students will work in an approved setting to obtain applied experience in the use of GIS. Students must be supervised by a member of the graduate faculty, who will determine whether the nature and amount of the work performed satisfies the requirements for graduate credit. Credit

Prerequisite: GEOG 5361.



supervisor. Credit 3

# ADVISORY COMMITTEE AGREEMENT

of the following faculty as I, \_\_\_\_\_, do hereby submit the names  
of the following faculty as I, \_\_\_\_\_, do hereby submit the names  
of the following faculty as I, \_\_\_\_\_, do hereby submit the names

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature	Committee Member Printed Name
_____	_____
(Committee Chair)	
_____	_____
(Committee Member)	
_____	_____
(Committee Member)	
_____	_____
(Committee Member)	

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Title: \_\_\_\_\_

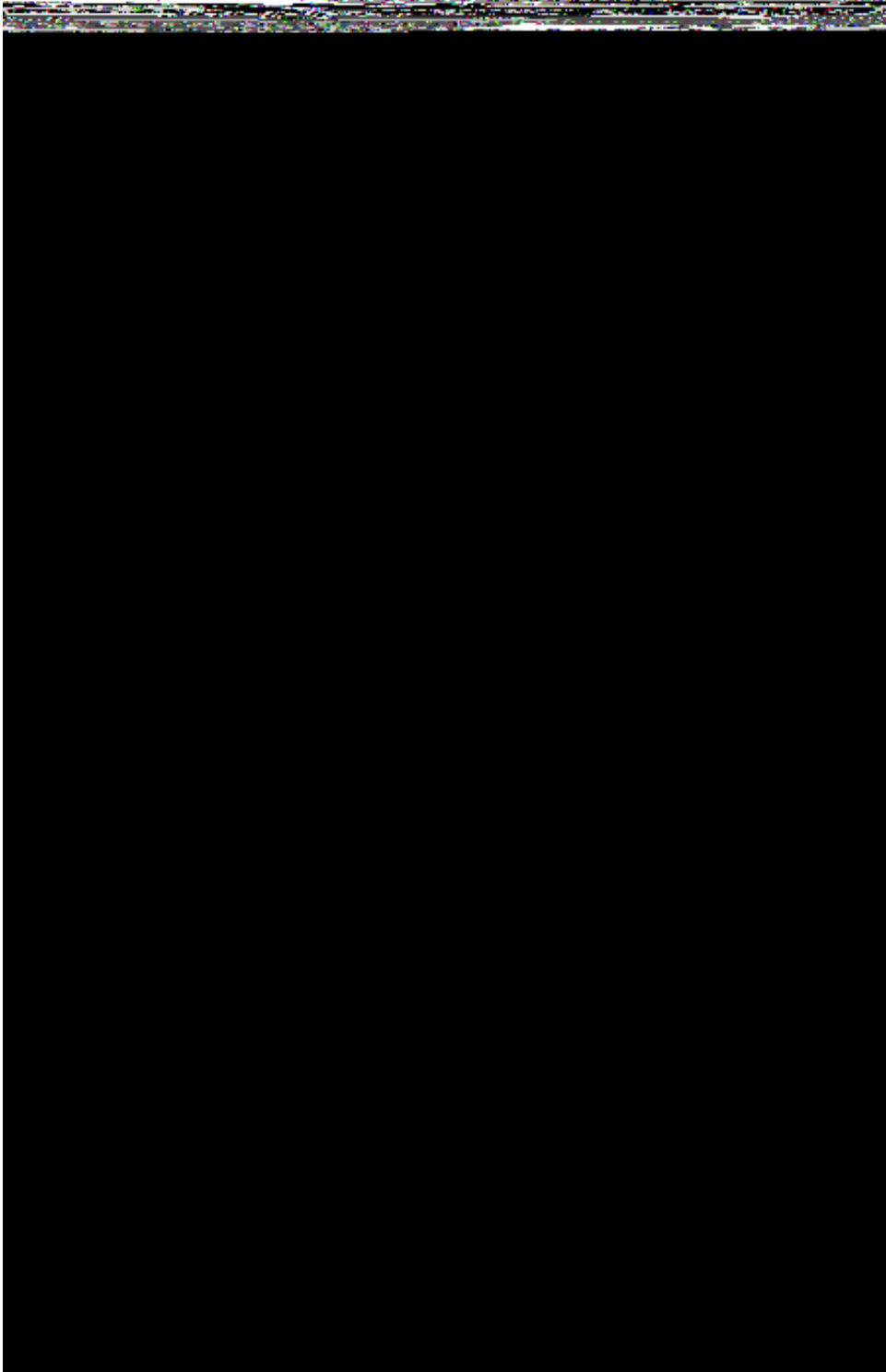
Official Use Only

Date Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Dean's Signature



Comprehensive Examination Committee Form





Report of Thesis Examination

\_\_\_\_\_, SAM ID: \_\_\_\_\_

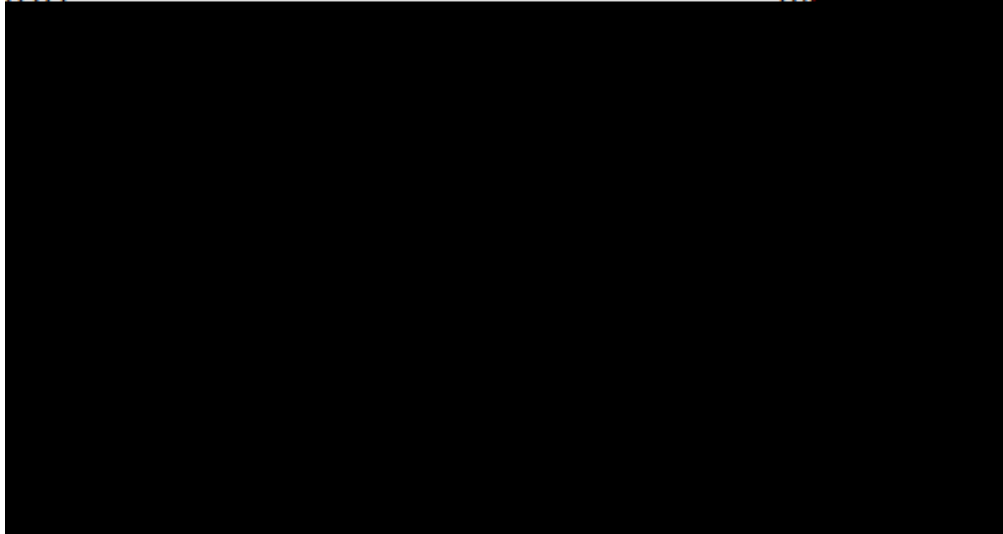
the degree of \_\_\_\_\_ a candidate for  
on the thesis project entitled \_\_\_\_\_ was examined

\_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_, in Room \_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_

members of the thesis committee certify that the student \_\_\_\_\_ building The 1  
led) (passed/fai

ITTEE

THE THESIS COMM





On the back of this page is a **checklist of steps** which must be completed before enrolling in the course, as well as a **list of the specifics** of the projects as agreed to by the Sland GGPC. Signature lines are provided, as needed, for the student, SI, and GGPC respectively.

### Checklist and Signature Page

1. Proposal received by SI. \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

2a. As agreed upon by the student and the SI, the final project will be in the form of: (check one or more as necessary)

- a. paper
- b. poster
- c. map
- d. database
- e. other (please specify)

\_\_\_\_\_

2b. Student will present the results:

- a. at a conference (SWAAG, AAG, ...)
- b. to the SHSU Environmental and Geoscience Faculty
- c. to geography students at SHSU
- d. at an SHSU graduate research symposium on campus
- e. only to the SI
- f. other (please specify)

\_\_\_\_\_

2c. The project must be submitted to the SI by the following date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

SI's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Proposal received by GGPC. \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

4. Proposal has been **accepted**/**rejected** (circle one) by GGPC and GIS Graduate committee members.

GGPC \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

1. If the section of the course in which the student will enroll is not offered under the SI's name, please have the Instructor of Record responsible for entering the student's gradesign and date this form in the space below with acknowledgment that he/she will serve as the IOR for grade entry. \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

Comments/Suggestions by GGPC and GIS Graduate committee for improvement of the proposal: \_

# Sam Houston State University

A Member of the Texas State University System

## OFFICE OF GRADUATE STUDIES Thesis and Dissertation Initiation Sheet

Please complete the entirety of this form and submit to the Office of Graduate Studies by mail, email, or direct drop off during regular university hours.

Email: gradstudies@shsu.edu

Phone: (936) 291-2408

Main campus: ABIV, Office 431

Mail: Office of Graduate Studies

Sam Houston State University

Box 2541

Huntsville, TX 773412541

### Student Information

University ID#:

First name:

Last name:

College and Program Information

Thesis

Dissertation

Thesis /Dissertation Director

Thesis / Dissertation GDirector (if applicable)

List all other committee members:

College

Department:

Please provide a brief summary of your research question:

Note: The Thesis Initiation sheet can also be found in two locations on the Graduate Studies' website:

- x Graduate Studies >> Faculty and Staff Resources >> Faculty & Staff  
Forms: <http://www.shsu.edu/dept/graduatestudies/faculty-staff-resources.html>
- x Graduate Studies >> Graduate Student Toolkit  
Forms: <http://www.shsu.edu/dept/graduatestudies/gradtoolkit.html>

College of Science and Engineering Technology (COSET) Scholarships

Graduate Recruitment Scholarship

The College of Science and Engineering Technology (COSET) Graduate Recruitment

1. a  $\frac{1}{2}$



Checklist for graduate students

(to be kept in student file)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

	Task	Date	Signature
1.	Obtain copy of Departmental Graduate Handbook	_____	_____
2.	Sign and submit Graduate Student Contract	_____	_____
3.	Meet with Graduate Coordinator for course selection	_____	_____
4.	Degree Plan selected	_____	_____